



Department of Pesticide Regulation

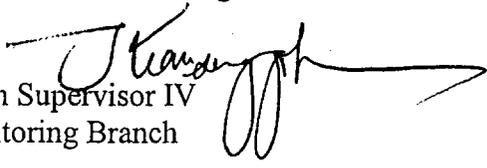


Paul E. Helliker
Director

MEMORANDUM

Gray Davis
Governor
Winston H. Hickox
Secretary, California
Environmental
Protection Agency

TO: Catherine Cooper
Agricultural Chemist III
Center for Analytical Chemistry
California Department of Food and Agriculture

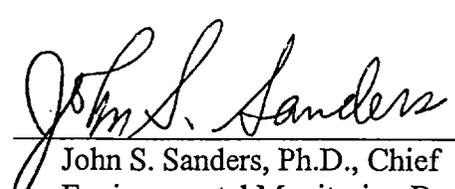
FROM: Kean S. Goh, Ph.D. 
Agricultural Program Supervisor IV
Environmental Monitoring Branch
(916) 324-4100

DATE: July 17, 2002

SUBJECT: TRACE DETECTIONS OF PESTICIDES IN SURFACE WATER SAMPLES

A primary goal of the Department of Pesticide Regulation's (DPR's) surface water program is to identify and control pesticides that cause toxicity to aquatic organisms. For some pesticides, toxic effects to sensitive aquatic species occur at concentrations less than current reporting limits. DPR's surface water program would benefit from the identification of samples that likely contain pesticides at concentrations less than the reporting limit. Therefore, the Environmental Monitoring Branch requests "trace" detections be reported on chain of custody sheets for all surface water matrix samples. We are defining trace detection as an analyte concentration that falls between the reporting limit and method detection limit. In addition, the chemist determines that the trace detection is likely due to the analyte of interest, in his/her best professional judgment. A trace detection does not require the chemist to be certain that the analyte is present in the sample, only that the analyte is likely to be present. A trace detection should not be reported if in the chemist's opinion it is likely due to an interference or other artifact or it is masked by the background. A trace detection does not require confirmation or unequivocal identification of the analyte. The word "trace" should be written on the chain of custody to document trace detections. Trace detections should not be quantified since they are likely less than the quantitation limit. The chemist may include additional qualifiers or descriptions of the trace detection on the chain of custody or separate document. This request only applies to surface water samples.

Thank you for your consideration of this request. Please contact me if you have any questions.

Approved by: 
John S. Sanders, Ph.D., Chief
Environmental Monitoring Branch

Date: 7/17/02

